THE LOSS TO ISRAEL, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THE WORLD WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROEMER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of personal sadness and political sadness that I rise today to talk about Israel's loss with the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the loss for the Middle East, and the loss for the world.

As generations of Americans have talked with a great deal of sadness about the loss of our President, President Kennedy, and they talk about where they were when that event happened, and how it shook America to its foundations, I think many people will never forget where they were when they heard the news of this tragic murder of Prime Minister Rabin.

I think it is tragic for many reasons. It is tragic because, at a time when so many people are critical about the political process, they complain about the vacuum of leadership in politics today, and the lack of courage in politics today. Here was a man that would never, he would never lick his finger and put it to the wind and say ''What should I do next?'' This man was a tornado, a wind tunnel who would create the winds of change, and try to convince and control and persuade the Israeli people that his attitudes about the peace process were the just ones and the right ones, and, we all know, the courageous ones.

I have met Prime Minister Rabin three or four different times, one time just recently in Israel, when he talked at length about his efforts toward the peace process in the Middle East. Prime Minister Rabin, I do not think, would meet some Americans' definition of ''charismatic.'' He was not particularly the backslapping type. He was not always the first one to tell you a joke. He had a charisma of toughness, of vision, of courage. He would smoke his cigarette and let the American Members of Congress know that nothing was going to deter him from his efforts to achieve an everlasting peace for the people of Israel and the people of the Middle East and the people of the world.

I do not think many Americans or people anywhere in the world, for that matter, can forget the historic occasion of the handshake on the White House lawn a year and a half ago. I think everybody remembers with a great deal of pride as Americans that this took place in America, when Prime Minister Rabin and Mr. Arafat shook hands on the White House lawn, making all of us feel that almost anything was achievable; that if these two people could come to a peace and an understanding and a commitment to work together, certainly that was an inspiration to many Americans that we can do the same kinds of things; that anything is possible to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that Mr. Rabin was a lawyer, a general in 1967, a warrior for victory in 1967 in a war that meant everything to the Israeli people. Over the decades he was a patriot for peace to his people, winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1994. I want to express, on behalf of my constituents in northern Indiana, and maybe on behalf of some Members of the House of Representatives, as many Members are currently over in Israel right now, the deep sense of loss that Americans feel as Mr. Rabin leaves us.

We extend our prayers and our thoughts and sympathies to Mr. Rabin's family, and also to the people of Israel, who are our good friends and who are going to be going through a very difficult time, not only by losing a Prime Minister through assassination, but in many ways, the State of Israel has lost a bit of its innocence with this very tragic act. We know that they can overcome this, and we know the people of Israel and the people of America will continue to work together in the efforts to sustain the legacy that Mr. Rabin leaves all of us: One of hope and commitment to work with other people, even your enemies, at times, and the hope and commitment to attain a just and everlasting peace.

DEBATES ON BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF YITZHAK RABIN AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I also wish to express my condolences not only to Mr. Rabin's family, but also to the people of Israel on behalf of my family and my district. It obviously was a devastating loss for a peace process that began some time back, with the Camp David accords, and has now seen two great leaders and visionaries slain on behalf of peace in the Middle East, and how ironic it is that Anwar Sadat was assassinated by an extremist, an extremist Arab group that wanted to do anything they could to stop peace in the Middle East, and that now the Prime Minister was slain by an extremist in his own land. It shows the divisions that run deep in this conflict that have been going on for thousands of years, but is yet another step in a painful process toward peace, and one that we, obviously, must have, and must press forward to secure.

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I just thank him for all he did during his lifetime to help secure that peace.

Today I wish to speak on a matter that is pressing at home regarding the balanced budget debate. We have heard much over the weeks, we have heard much over the past months and over the past year on how we balance our budget and what we do to balance our budget.

Mr. Speaker, I went home this past weekend and spoke at some meetings across the district, both formal and informal, and talked to people and tried to get a sense of what they were thinking about our plan to balance the budget. We are the first balanced budget plan in over a generation.

As I came back, it really did hit me after talking to those Americans that the plan that now is before Congress, and the one that we have passed, with all of its flaws, really does give the American people the best chance they have had in some time to put their financial house in order, really for the first time in a generation.

Mr. Speaker, look what has happened over the past 40 years, over the past 40 years of liberal spending policies and liberal taxing policies in this House. Of course, everybody knows that it has been 40 years since we have really had a true, bona fide, balanced budget plan and that this year we are $4.9 trillion in debt. Think about that for a second. $4.9 trillion. That is a lot of zeros.

We right now are spending $270 billion on interest alone, paying off the interest on the debt, $270 billion. We are spending as much money paying off interest on the American debt as we are spending on our Department of Defense budget. Think about that for a second.

We spend as much money paying off interest on the debt as we spend on tanks, jets, B–2 bombers, *Seawolf* submarines, our military infrastructure, paying all of the personnel costs, all the health care costs, all of the defense-related costs, $270 billion, and yet it seems ironic to me that all of those liberals that stand up and scream and tell us that we are spending too much money on the defense budget that in the end is to protect the shores of this great country and to protect American interests across the globe, those same liberals are saying, OK, $270 billion is too much to protect our country, but on the other hand, it is not too much to protect our financial future. They have no objection with us continuing to throw $270 billion away per year on interest payments alone. That is money that goes right down the drain, that does not support any programs whatsoever, that does not support Medicare or Social Security, or support anything.

Yet, today, every child is spending, or every child has a debt of $20,000 on their head. If a child is born today, that child will pay well over $150,000 over their working lifetime on taxes alone simply to pay off their portion of the debt that is on this country right now.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, it disturbs me to hear them complaining about the fact that we finally stepped up to the plate and were willing to do what